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Title: Situation arising out of the demand of Central Government for refund of 158 crores from the Karnataka Government given for relief and rehabilitation work in flood affected areas of the State.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (BANGALORE SOUTH): Thank you very much, Sir.

I am raising a very shocking issue about the flood relief that has been given to the State of Karnataka. In that, Rs.158.15 crore has been instructed to be returned back. The entire Karnataka went under severe flood for three times. The Karnataka State Government submitted three memoranda to the Union Government, to the tune of Rs.4896 crore. When the hon. Prime Minister wanted to inspect the flood situation in Karnataka, he came to Goa but could not come to Karnataka. Telephonically, he told the Agriculture Minister, Shri Sharad Pawarji that the Union Government is giving an *ad hoc* relief of Rs.300 crore. But it is unfortunate that despite our three memoranda for Rs.4896.97 crore, this is the situation.

Sir, more than 18 districts and 104 *tehsils* are affected; 5-Â½ lakh acres of crops have been totally devastated; 1,30,000 houses have been destroyed; and 130 people have died. The Union Government gave an *ad hoc* interim relief of Rs.357 crore only. I want to draw the attention of the hon. Leader of the House also. In that Rs.357 crore also, now it is the most shocking news to the people of Karnataka, the flood-affected farmers and land labourers of Karnataka that Rs.158.15 crore has been ordered to be returned back to the Union Government. Therefore, I also want to bring to your kind notice and, through you, to the Leader of this House that we had two Calling Attention notices. During that, the Union Home Minister said on 28th November, which I quote as:

> "Both the instalments of the Central share of Calamity Relief Fund of Rs.86 crore for the current year has already been released to the State Government on May 30, 2005 and August 11, 2005, respectively. In addition, an *ad hoc* release of Rs.357 crore was made to the State from National Calamity Contingent Fund on August 11, 2005 towards July-August flood relief."

He gave this statement on the floor of the House on 28 November 2005. On 29 November 2005, the Reserve Bank of India gave a direction to the Karnataka State Government to return back Rs.158.15 crore.

With your permission, there was again another Calling Attention in this august House. While replying to that Calling Attention , the Union Home Minister said: "Another Central Team has been deputed to assess the flood-affected areas and the damage of the flood-affected areas in Karnataka State in November." They have already received the details and they are going to process the details."

The hon. Union Minister also gave the assurance saying : "The Government of India is standing with the people." Sir, through you, I am drawing the attention of the hon. Leader of the House and also the attention of the hon. Parliamentary Affairs Minister to a statement. The Union Government, through the hon. Home Minister, said:

> "The Government of India is standing with the people of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka during this hour of natural calamity. The Relief Fund, which has been allocated, is only meant for expeditious relief for the people. A Central Team has already been despatched to assess the devastation caused by this natural calamity. The Team has submitted its report and it is being studied by the Government. The Government is committed to provide more funds as soon as the Government reach the conclusions."

This is the reply given by the Union Home Minister on the floor of the House on 7th December. I think it is misleading the entire House because on 29th November only the Government of India gave a direction to the Government of Karnataka to return Rs.158.15 crore which it has allocated for the flood relief work of Karnataka. It is not only that.

It is unfortunate that the same thing has happened to various States. The Union Government has directed Maharashtra to return Rs.362 crore; Gujarat, Rs.195 crore; and, Himachal Pradesh, Rs.35 crore.

Therefore, I would request that the Union Government represented here by the hon. Defence Minister should intervene. He should assure the House that whatever *ad hoc* relief that has been given to various States, especially to the State of Karnataka, would be deemed to be released to that State. It is not only that.

The Government of Karnataka needs more money, more funds as assured by the Union Home Minister in this House. Therefore, I would request an intervention by the hon. Defence Minister. It is a very serious matter....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, that is why, I have allowed you although you have not given any notice in time.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : I thank you very much for that. The entire State of Karnataka is agitated. I would request him to intervene....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have allowed you to speak nearly for ten minutes.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Yes, Sir, you have allowed me. But I want a reply from the Government because it is such a serious matter....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: How can he reply just now? Shri Basu Deb Acharia to speak now.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : He can simply say that he will look into the matter and he will talk to the hon. Prime Minister....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: He is patiently listening to you all through your speech.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : The hon. Prime Minister has telephonically assured the State of Karnataka that Rs. 300 crore would be released....(*Interruptions*) I am cooperating with you. I want an assurance.

MR. SPEAKER: You are such a cooperative hon. Member. Please cooperate with me.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : I want an assurance from the Government.

MR. SPEAKER: How can you get it? I cannot compel anybody to give an assurance.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : It is a very serious matter....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing more will be recorded now.

*(Interruptions) *â€¦*

MR. SPEAKER: Only Shri Basu Deb Acharia's statement will go on record. (*Interruptions*) â€¦*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, the Ministry of Power, Government of India has decided to abandon the 280 megawatt, gas-based power project at Monarchak in Tripura....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ananth Kumar, I earnestly request to sit down now. I have allowed you because of the importance of the matter concerning the people.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : I entirely appreciate it.

MR. SPEAKER: I have allowed you although your notice is not in time. But I cannot compel anybody.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You know very well that I cannot compel anybody to make any response.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : I am only requesting the hon. Minister, through you, Sir, to intervene....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Why do you say that you would come to the Well of the House?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : It is a serious matter. The hon. Leader of the House can just intervene and say something.

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*Not Recorded

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Sir, he has stated in respect of a number of States. He has referred to not only Karnataka but also he has referred to Maharashtra and Gujarat. These matters are to be ascertained. I cannot just give an off-the-cuff response to him....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: He has said that how could he always give an instant reply.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : He can talk to the hon. Prime Minister. I am raising a very serious matter of public importance.

MR. SPEAKER: How can he say that? When the matters are being mentioned, it is assumed that the Government is listening to them for taking appropriate action. Shri Ananth Kumar, this is unfair.

...(*Interruptions*[R5])

MR. SPEAKER: The other Members have important matters to raise.

....(*Interruptions*)